

WASHINGTON, DC –“ Congressman Joe Courtney issued the following statement today following comments by Defense Secretary Robert Gates in which he outlined proposals to reduce the defense budget.

“While I am concerned that Secretary Gates has raised the possibility of base closings as a way to trim the defense budget, the reality is that any proposal that would affect Submarine Base New London would have to be first presented to Congress for review,” Courtney said.

“Unfortunately, others like Sen. Judd Gregg (R-NH) -- a member of the Deficit Commission -- have proposed a new BRAC round as a way to reduce our federal budget. As a member of the House Armed Services Committee, which oversaw the meager results of the last BRAC round, I am totally opposed to any attempt by either the Commission or the Department of Defense to authorize a new BRAC.”

Yesterday, Sec. Gates held a news conference in which he outlined his plan to reduce the defense budget through cutting inefficiencies in the department. He also stated that he “authorized each of the military departments to consider consolidation or closure of excess bases and other facilities where appropriate.” The full transcript can be found [here](#) .

Further, Sen. Gregg said, “defense should be looked at, perhaps through another base-closing commission.” The story can be found [here](#) .

“As I have stressed all along, we must be vigilant in guarding against threats to the base and keep investing in SUBASE New London so it can accomplish its first and most urgent mission – the support of our submarine force and sailors,” Courtney added. “That is why I have worked hard since 2007 to secure the kind of improvements necessary to secure the future of the base.”

Since 2007, Congressman Courtney has secured approximately \$85 million in new military construction projects at the base. This total includes: \$9.3 million for a Submarine Learning Center, \$11.9 million for a Waterfront Operations Center, \$11 million for a new indoor firing range, \$46 million to replace Pier 32 on the waterfront, and \$6.6 million for a new MK-49 Torpedo Magazine. Further, the pending 2011 Military Construction appropriations bill includes \$12.93 million for the relocation of the Submarine Group Headquarters building, moving the command closer to the waterfront operations it oversees.

In addition, Congressman Courtney has introduced H.R. 5755, a bill which would allow the Department of Defense to limit competition on state-funded military construction projects to only those firms located in the state. The State of Connecticut is funded several projects at the base that will improve its infrastructure and partner with the Navy to support the installation.